

Worthington (W)

25

ANNUAL ADDRESS,

TO THE

“CHESTER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY.”

DELIVERED APRIL 25, 1848.

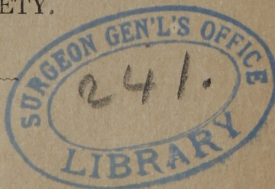
BY



WILMER WORTHINGTON, M. D.

PUBLISHED

BY REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.



WEST CHESTER,
JOHN HODGSON, PRINTER.
1848.

WEST CHESTER, April 25th, 1848.

Dr. W. WORTHINGTON :

Dear Sir : In behalf of the Chester County Medical Society, the undersigned, their Committee, respectfully request of you for publication, your interesting address delivered on the 25th inst.

Respectfully your obedient servants,

J. B. BRINTON,
CHARLES W. PARRISH, } Committee.
JOSEPH HICKMAN,

~~~~~  
WEST CHESTER, April 25, 1848.

GENTLEMEN :

Your kind note, requesting for publication, a copy of my address, delivered this day before the Chester County Medical Society, has been received. Whatever may be my own views with regard to the publication of this address, I do not feel myself at liberty to disregard the wishes of my professional friends.— Being prepared in pursuance of their appointment, I consider it their right to make such use of it as they deem proper, and therefore, place it at your disposal.

I am, very truly,

your friend,

WILMER WORTHINGTON.

Drs. JNO. B. BRINTON, }  
C. W. PARRISH, } Committee.  
JNO. HICKMAN, }



## A D D R E S S .

---

GENTLEMEN :

I approach the duty assigned me upon this occasion, with diffidence. I appear as the organ of the Chester County Medical Society, to speak in its behalf, at its first annual meeting, after a long suspension of its labours. The position is one, calculated to awaken feelings of apprehension in a mind unaccustomed to play so conspicuous a part, in such a large circle of scientific and professional friends. I am, however, fully sensible that I address those who are imbued with liberal sentiments, and endowed with a spirit of magnanimity which will lead them to regard in a proper light, every honest effort to do good, although it may be humble in its nature.

No one acquainted with the duties of the medical practitioner can hesitate to believe, that the profession to which he belongs is one involving the highest responsibilities. It seeks to alleviate the sufferings of human nature. It contends with disease in every form to which humanity is liable. When the precincts of health are invaded—when that intricate piece of mechanism which the sweet Psalmist of Israel has said, is “fearfully and wonderfully made,” is deranged, this profession is looked to as the instrument under the blessing of Providence, to repair the injury. When suffering man is distracted with pain, he turns to the physician for relief.—With what anxiety does he listen to his advice—and with what solicitude does he regard his admonitions when surrounded with a death-dealing epidemic? Then, amidst suffering and danger he flies to the profession, and for the time, none are held in higher estimation, or received with more cordial expressions of regard, than those who sedulously devote themselves to the duties it enjoins.

Need I say, that whoever assumes these solemn duties, takes upon himself the implied obligation to discharge them with untiring fidelity—and if he fail through gross ignorance or neglect, he is amenable to the laws of God as well as man. He is bound to avail himself of the opportunities which are offered, for acquiring a knowledge of the various branches of the profession he seeks to practice. Medical Schools are in successful operation in so many places throughout the Union, that none who are disposed to learn may remain in ignorance for want of a proper medical education. If



he desire to qualify himself for the duties of the physician, the requisite facilities are within his reach. If he duly appreciate the high obligations which the profession enjoins upon those who enter it, he will not fail to seek that knowledge which is necessary for a proper discharge of its duties. He will make himself familiar with those fundamental principles, without which, he could never attain to distinction in the healing art. He would shudder at the thought of treating disease, the nature of which he did not understand, and turn with horror from the dreadful reflection, that his ignorance might contribute to the death of his patient. Yet, how many are there in every country, who do not properly appreciate the solemn responsibilities they assume, when they enter the profession of medicine? Actuated by the love of money, fame, or influence in the world, some have engaged in the practice of medicine, with little knowledge, and less principle. They have come forth as professed disciples of Esculapius, clothed with the privilege of treating disease from some unknown or insignificant school, and palming themselves upon the unsuspecting portion of the community, they flourish as the great prodigies of the age, until some glaring blunder reveals their true character. It may be, some valued friend or relative is the victim of their deception, and this melancholy event has led to the detection of the guilty pretender.

From the earliest dawn of medical science, we find by recurring to its history, that improvements have been gradual but constant. Having but a humble origin, it remained a long time in a crude and unsettled state, receiving but few well-digested and permanent accessions. Here and there isolated facts were revealed, which being grouped together and arranged in the form of a system, gave to the art of healing the character of a distinct science. From that day to the present, talents of the highest order, and industry the most unwearied, have been employed to perfect this great benevolent enterprize. No profession can lay claim to more eminent attainments in scientific researches—or a purer benevolence, than that which has marked our own. We say this in no spirit of boasting. The history of medicine furnish thousands of names which adorn the brightest pages of philosophy and literature, and even at this day, we can trace to the ranks of our profession, some of the brightest luminaries that shed their beams over the scientific world.

It has been said, and with much truth, that we live in an age peculiarly distinguished for great improvements. To whatever portion of history we turn our attention for the last fifty years, we find its pages brightened with the discoveries of the period to which it relates. Scarcely any branch of science has been neglected—

Every department of science has received its accessions, while new ones have been established upon a permanent basis.

The introduction of steam as a propulsive agent, the successful application of which is owing to American genius and enterprise, is one of the great wonders of the age. It has done more to advance the civil and political interests of man, than any other invention of the times. Through its agency, distance and time have been almost annihilated. Our rivers are covered with fleets of steam boats, bearing with rapid and constant progress the productions of every section of the Union, and armies of men, engaged in their exchange, for the mutual benefit of all. Every stream is made tributary to enhance the wealth and comfort of our people, either by bearing upon their surface these floating vehicles of commercial intercourse, or propelling machinery for the manufacture of articles suited to the wants of man.

Rail roads and canals are running like arteries through the land, giving life, and energy, and power to the whole. Here, again, we find the steam engine called into requisition, and where animal power was formerly the only means of travel and transportation, its place is supplied by this iron-horse, whose value is every where attested, and whose agency is every where sought.

Notwithstanding these great inventions, which have created so much astonishment throughout the world, and extended such unnumbered blessings to civilized man, we have yet another of greater wonder, and more extraordinary in its operation. By it, man is enabled to command the lightning of Heaven, and render it subservient to his will, in holding converse with distant cities. In the course of a few minutes, he may transmit a message and obtain a response from those who reside at the distance of hundreds of miles. And the period is not very remote, when the most distant points of our vast Union will be united by these metallic rods, to convey our thoughts from place to place with almost the same rapidity they are now spoken. And who can tell, but that the shores of the mighty ocean may hereafter be linked together by the same means, and thus, kingdoms and continents be made to approximate, until the entire earth shall be encircled, and every important city connected by the wires of the magnetic telegraph. In the contemplation of this improvement we are induced to ask, who shall set bounds to the inventive powers of the human mind? Surely, none but God.

Do we wish to procure the likeness of our friends? We have only to command the light of the sun, and the work is accomplished. The most perfect resemblance is obtained, almost as it were in the twinkling of an eye.

Such, are some of the great inventions of the last half century.—



The powers of the human mind have been signally displayed. The civil, political, and religious blessings of man have all been extended with unprecedented rapidity.

Among the various changes which have occurred to promote the welfare of man, the profession of medicine can fairly claim its full share. Its devoted partizans have been diligent to extend its usefulness; and with this view, new modes of investigation have been adopted—the aid of new sciences invoked, and greater success given to the educated practitioner. The analytic method of investigating human maladies, rendered more effectual by the facilities now afforded of employing the scalpel and the microscope to reveal the correct nature of disease, has greatly promoted medical knowledge. We stand now upon as lofty an eminence, and are as justly entitled to be ranked as a science, as any other pursuit. The healing art is not that crude and undigested system of absurdities, which it seems to have been in the earlier days of its history. Every department of science has contributed to its elevation; and with those who are competent to appreciate the benevolent labours of the educated and scientific physician, it is regarded as one of the most honorable pursuits. It is not strange that the unworthy and designing should seek its honors. It is one of the imperfections of our nature, to claim distinction, and seek renown where it is not to be obtained. Ambition may incite men to deeds of daring, and by one successful effort, may encircle their brows with unfading laurels—or it may lead them to climb the rugged hill of science; but there is but one way by which the summit can be reached. It is not by a sudden and momentary effort. It must be gradually and perseveringly sought. Days and nights of toil must be passed, and step by step the ascent must be overcome. In no profession is this more emphatically true, than in ours. It embraces a large amount of knowledge. It includes almost every branch of science, and he who would attain its loftiest honors, must never grow weary of his labours.

While we have been living under favorable auspices, when science, and genius, and the blessings of Providence, have all contributed to advance the general good, is it not strange, that empiricism in every thing, and especially in medicine, should exhibit such fascinating powers over the minds of so many of our race? It would seem, as though in proportion to the advancement of some, others bewildered by the light of science which beams around them, were incapable or unwilling to press forward in the cause of truth, and choose rather to give free indulgence to uncultivated propensities, and seek renown amidst the rubbish of the grossest empiricism. This remark is applicable to all who travel



out of the beaten path of science, which is adorned with the richest fruits of observation and philosophic truth, and seek to rear a name upon some hypothetical system or absurd dogma, which is fanned into a blaze, but soon dies away and is forgotten, with its ingnoble author.

To review the history of medicine, and notice the various systems of empiricism which have arisen, had their day of ignominy, and sunk again to oblivion, would open a field, too extensive to be explored upon this occasion. From the earliest period of our art, these absurdities have had their beginning and their end. One has succeeded another, with a singular rapidity, but all sooner or later meet the same fate.

It is not beyond the recollection of many who hear me, that Perkinism, Thompsonianism, Homœopathy, and Hydropathy, were hailed as the welcome harbingers of certain health—and all of which have inflicted their full share of injury upon a credulous community. The first two, where are they? Almost entirely forgotten. It is but occasionally that you hear of a case, treated according to the principles of Thompson, whose name at one time was almost synonymous with *Lobelia*. In some parts of our country at least, it embraced a number of zealous advocates, and I have every reason to believe, that many useful lives were sacrificed to this perilous delusion. To rely upon this system of treatment now, in any important case would excite a sentiment of derision, rather than of approbation. The idea of the self constituted Doctor which it so freely propagated, has become obsolete; and the public mind is again looking for more skill than was ever found in the possession of the Thompsonian practitioner.

My intention, however, upon this occasion, is to speak more particularly of another system of empiricism, which in some places has acquired considerable notoriety. Although it dates, an earlier origin than either of the others, and excels them in ingenuity, it is only within a few years that it has attracted much attention in this country. Beginning in Germany in the latter part of the seventeenth century, it lingered in different places upon the continent, attracting more or less attention, until it reached our shores and took its abode among our German population. Here, it met with sufficient encouragement to induce a number of practitioners to embrace it—and soon, most of our large cities had their Homœopathic doctors, from whence are to be supplied every village and neighborhood, until the whole land is converted to the doctrines of Hahnemann.

Coming to us under the garb of a scientific system of medicine, it is proper that we should give it a fair investigation. Its princi-

ples should be rightly understood—and we shall not consider it unworthy our candid examination. If the principles are well founded, let them be adopted. If on the other hand they are false, let them be discarded. It is not the province of the physician, to reject any system of practice, without first learning its merits. His object is to contend with disease in every form in which it is presented, and he will not hesitate to use those means which are best adapted to the object in view. If there be any thing in the system of Hahnemann, that is better suited to the cure of our maladies, than our own, let us avail ourselves of it. Let us first, however be careful that we do not substitute a practice far inferior—one, that is totally inefficient.

It is said of Hahnemann, that he found the practice of medicine so unsuccessful in his hands, that he set about reforming it. The result of this effort was the Homœopathic system. After many years of toil and close study, he arrived at conclusions of the greatest absurdity, and which he propagated with the zeal of an enthusiast. To examine minutely the principles upon which this system is founded, although an easy task, would require more time than we can at present, appropriate to such a purpose. To notice briefly some of the leading doctrines, and the dangers, to which they lead, will afford ample proof of their falsity, to every enlightened and unbiassed mind.

Three distinct propositions or maxims, embrace the fundamental principles of this system. The first may be expressed in the following words:—

All simple medicines taken by individuals in health, will produce under all circumstances, a train of morbid symptoms, which are similar to those observed in corresponding natural diseases.

He attempts to establish the truth of this maxim, by a reference to some of the older writers upon medicine, and by a series of experiments upon himself and others.

Although Hahnemann was not the first to observe that drugs produced certain symptoms when administered to healthy persons, he may be considered as the author of the false doctrine, that those symptoms are identical, without regard to the peculiarity of the system upon which they act. It is unfortunate for the advocates of this doctrine, that the same results from these experiments have not been obtained by others, who have endeavored with entire honesty, to test its truth. It is only in the hands of the great reformer himself, and perhaps a few of his disciples, that they have proved successful. And when we consider that he did not enjoy the best reputation for integrity and truth, but was guilty in various instances of moral and scientific duplicity, we are compelled to attach very little value to his experiments. Besides, we cannot



avoid taking into view the fact, that he was an enthusiastic reformer, and liable to be misled by a blind and infatuated zeal to propagate his new system. That he was to some extent made the dupe of others, we learn from a source fully entitled to our confidence. "We are told (says a respectable writer upon this subject,) by a trustworthy young physician, now in this country, who after he had finished his studies in France and Germany, had lived some months with Hahnemann, chiefly to become acquainted with his mode of treatment, that he was frequently induced by his fellow students to follow their example, and make to Hahnemann fictitious statements about the drug symptoms, after new trials with such drugs as he made them take. Hahnemann appeared confidently to believe the most absurd and ridiculous reports, and wrote them down with great satisfaction, probably for a new work, or for the next edition of one of his old "gigantic" works."

The writings of Hahnemann, as well as those who have succeeded him, as expounders of this new doctrine, abundantly prove the truth of this statement,—exhibiting as they do, groups of symptoms too ridiculous to be sanctioned by any well informed mind, and which never could have obtained a lodgment, except in the brain of those of the easiest credulity. Now in sincerely endeavoring to learn the truth or falsity of this maxim of Hahnemann, it would be very unwise to adopt the declaration of such a man, without properly guarding ourselves against imposition. Certainly, there is no good reason why we should lay aside our own judgment and observation, and imbibe his peculiar dogmas, unless they are well founded, and will bear the test of the closest scrutiny. Will they do so?

If this maxim be true, the experience of the medical profession for more than two thousand years has been altogether useless. The great amount of talent and learning, which have adorned our science, have been greatly perverted, in observing the effects of agents upon the animal organization. All their views upon this subject, have been founded in error. The universal sentiment that idiosyncracies exist, which render the impression of an agent different in one person from that of another, is untrue. If a dose of medicine be taken by a person in health, and a certain train of morbid symptoms are produced, the same result must follow in every other case, whatever difference of physical condition may exist. Intemperance, from the use of spirituous liquors, must produce the same symptoms in all. Whereas, in one case, we find them producing a disease of the liver, in another, of the lungs, in a third, an inflammation of the stomach or brain—in others, a rheumatism, an apoplexy, a palsy, an epilepsy, or that dreadful and agonizing form of insanity known by the name of delirium tremens. These, with a host of other mal-



adies are well known to be produced by the use of alcohol ; and no two cases, presenting exactly the same morbid symptoms to a discerning and well informed physician.

The same thing may be said, with equal truth, of almost any other poison. When miasmata exerts its baneful influence upon a number of persons, you will find them presenting different symptoms. They may all be affected with bilious fever—but its force will be more particularly expended upon the stomach of one, the liver of another, or the brain of a third—yet the cause is similar. The deleterious agent which has originated the morbid symptoms in all these cases, is doubtless the same—but exerting its influence upon systems modified by certain peculiar characteristics, known to belong to each individual.

If this doctrine of Hahnemann is to be regarded as a rule for the government of physicians in their practice, experience at the bedside is entirely unnecessary. We are not to look to the sick chamber as the place of acquiring a knowledge of the *modus operandi* of medicines. It is the effect of remedies upon the healthy we are required to study. All our efforts to attain skill in the nature and treatment of disease, must be directed to a faithful observation of those symptoms, which are produced in healthy individuals by the administration of drugs. The sick will afford no information upon this point. They are to be overlooked, until you are called upon to administer to their relief—and in doing this, you are to be guided by a certain infallible rule, which you have been taught to believe is certain in its application, simply for the reason that your remedy has been found to occasion in healthy persons, the same symptoms which you now witness, perhaps for the first time in the sick.

In order to make a consistent practitioner upon this system, it is incumbent upon the Homœopathic physician to use his remedies upon every patient whilst in a state of health. Without doing this, he cannot know what particular train of symptoms will be produced in his case. If medicines when given under such circumstances, always excited the same morbid symptoms, then such a course of trial might not be so necessary. But we know this is not the case—and even when diseased, the system is frequently so modified, that remedies produce very different results from what they do when in health. Hence, the rational practitioner of medicine is obliged to observe with the keenest vigilance the effect of his remedy, and if, from some idiosyncrasy, or a changed condition of his patient by disease, he finds it unsuited to the case, he timely resorts to other means to recover the health of his patient. Not so, however, with the Homœopathist. After giving his minute doses of medicine, and

the relief which was expected by his suffering patient not being received—and his case becoming more aggravated by the advancement of disease, he urges him to confidence in his remedy, by assuring him that it is only the *salutary counter—or after action* produced by it—and by perseverance he will eventually be cured. I shall be pardoned by relating the following anecdote illustrating the truth of this remark, which I obtained from an authentic source.

“We were (says the narrator) recently amused with a curious but true narrative, showing the obstinate and implicit faith of Homœopathists in the tenets and dictates of their doctrine, which was told to us by a professional man, to whom the patient afterwards applied.”

“In a large American city, a German merchant excessively enraptured with Homœopathie, and forcing this “great treasure” upon his fellow citizens by his constant obtrusive solicitations, induced a man, suffering from giddiness, to apply to his easy and quick-curing Homœopathic doctor. As the patient grew daily worse, after swallowing or smelling, we do not know exactly, a few atoms of some developed anti-psoric “drug-virtue,” he complained to the doctor, and was consoled with the assurance that this was the intended effect of the drug, being its “salutary counter operation.” After continuing the old, or some new developed drug virtue for several weeks, the indisposition increased, the giddiness, which before intermitted for hours or days, became constant, and the patient, on going down stairs, fell, and was near breaking his neck. The patient remonstrated with the all-curing doctor, and on telling him that he had almost broken his neck, the doctor jumped up joyfully, and cheerfully laughing exclaimed, “Oh! excellent! delightful! that is just the salutary after-operation for which I so much wished! now you must believe yourself completely cured.” The indignant patient, fearing a still more developed, similar after-operation, abandoned this frothy simpleton, applied to the allopathic physician mentioned above, and was soon cured of his giddiness by rational treatment. This mode of saying to patients who feel no relief, or even feel worse, “you are mistaken, you must not only feel much alleviated, but must now consider yourself completely cured,” is very common with Homœopathic practitioners; it does not always arise from intentional imposition, or from this modern mode of quackery, but may be frequently ascribed only to the very characteristics of all honest fanatics, who unconsciously blind to the light of truth, would make the whole world so, if they could, even by willingly sacrificing all that is dear to them.”

The second maxim upon which Hahnemann founds his theory is,



that the curative power of each simple medicine, consists entirely in the similarity of a natural disease, to those produced in healthy individuals by the administration of certain drugs.

This is the fundamental principle of the Homœopathic system of medicine—or, to use the language of its acknowledged writers \*—“the basis on which the entire system is founded is a law of nature acting alike on our physical and moral being, and which is briefly and forcibly expressed by the axiom, “*similia similibus curantur*,” or in other words, “like cures like,” the purport of which is, that *a disease is cured by such medicinal agents as have the power of developing a similar disorder in a state of health.*”

In illustration of this principle, a great number of instances are cited by Hahnemann and others, extracted principally from ancient and modern writers on medicine, but few of which, afford any evidence in confirmation of its truth. We will refer to some from their own works.

They tell us “a frost bitten member is best cured by the application of snow or iced water, while hot applications in a case of this nature, would impede the cure, or induce mortification.”\*

If this assertion be true, and as the law of nature upon which they act, is of universal application, you must in every case of frost bite use snow or ice to effect a cure. No matter what may be the degree of injury sustained, no departure from this rule is to be allowed. Warm or stimulating means would do mischief, and must therefore be avoided. Is there a medical man of even ordinary intelligence, or endowed with any experience upon the subject, that will subscribe to such a sentiment? In such cases, he would apply that remedy, which would, according to reason and observation be most likely to meet the necessities of the case—and not pursue the freezing course, simply for the reason, that as cold induced the injury, it must therefore certainly remove it. Now the philosophy of a rational system of treatment is this. When a limb has been exposed to severe cold so as to arrest the circulation and destroy the sensibility of the part, its vitality for the time being greatly weakened or destroyed, it would be unsafe to go to the opposite extreme, and apply at once a high degree of heat. By so doing, you would endanger the return of a healthy action, by the sudden transmission from one extreme of temperature to the other. To avoid this, a very moderate degree of warmth at first, gradually increased, until the natural heat of the limb is restored, and the healthy circulation and sensibility again imparted. This is a rational treatment. If snow or iced water is employed, it is not because “like cures like,” but for the more philosophical reason, that their temperature

---

\* Concise view of Homœopathy by the Irish Homœopathic Society.



is above that to which the limb has been exposed, and are therefore, best suited to the first step in effecting a healthy reaction—and is soon to be exchanged for a remedy still warmer, and this again for another, until finally we are frequently obliged to use articles of a highly stimulating nature, and with the most unequivocal benefit.

Now if Homœopathy is true, no change in the treatment is to be permitted. You must continue your snow or iced-water until the cure is complete. Who would think of enveloping a limb or the whole body in snow or ice, after vitality had been brought to the lowest ebb by exposure to cold, and continuing the application with that obstinate pertinacity which is known to belong to the disciples of Hahnemann, as the best means of restoring a healthy action? The Homœopathic practitioner however, as he does not usually approve of external remedies, would be obliged, perhaps, in such a case, to administer internally his billionth or decillionth of a grain of ice, and await its CERTAIN operation for a cure.

Again, the Homœopathist says, "a scald or burn is quickly cured by holding the affected part close to the fire, or by applying hot spirits, whereas, the application of cold would increase the inflammation and materially interfere with the recovery of the patient." "This law affords a satisfactory explanation why the genuine vaccine virus is so certain and efficacious a preventive against the small pox." "Mercury produces ulcerated sore throat in a healthy individual, and will cure a disease exactly resembling it." "Ipecacuanha causes vomiting in a healthy person, and will cure a patient suffering from a similar disturbance of the stomach." "In like manner every medicine will cure a disease, the exact image of which it can produce in a healthy individual."\*

Can any rational and well informed physician arrive at the conclusions here given? After a careful examination of the animal organism—the laws which govern it—the cause and nature of disease—and the action of medicinal agents upon it, can we assent to such irrational and unphilosophical views? Is it an established principle in the treatment of disease, that a scald or a burn is best and most quickly cured by the application of more heat, or aggravating the inflammation by covering the part with powerful stimulants? If such is the experience of medical men upon this point, we confess ourselves ignorant of the fact, and the practice we have been taught is altogether erroneous. In such cases, we would apply soothing applications, those which tend to allay the pain and inflammation. To irritate and aggra-

---

\* Concise view, &c.

vate both, would neither be agreeable to the patient, nor creditable to the physician. Would you apply hot spirits to an inflamed eye? Would you hold it near the fire in order to abate the inflammation, although, it resulted from a scald or a burn? Such a practice would betray the grossest ignorance, and common sense any where would condemn it.

Is the principle of practice correct, that employs *Ipecacuanha* in cases of vomiting? If it proceed from irritating ingesta in that organ, *Ipecacuanha* in allopathic doses might be useful—but even here, in every case it would not be judicious. In inflammation of the stomach, we all know, there is such an irritability of this organ, that great difficulty is frequently experienced in retaining the smallest article of drink. Would any sound practitioner ever dream of administering an article in this case that would provoke still further the already too highly irritated condition of the organ, and greatly aggravate that fearful disease, of which the vomiting was only a symptom? Is it true then, that *Ipecacuanha* is the remedy best adapted to tranquilize an inverted action of the stomach without any regard to the cause of the disturbance?

Neither is there any rational explanation of this law, to be drawn from the insertion of the vaccine virus as a preventive against small pox. Does the vaccine disease cure small pox? If it were employed for this purpose, you should wait until the system is affected with small pox, and then apply your remedy. The practice of vaccination to prevent an attack of that dreadful scourge of our race, is in accordance with a well established fact, that the human system is seldom attacked more than once with it; and by the introduction of the vaccine virus you place the system under a milder form of a similar disease, which destroys that peculiar susceptibility to it, and renders the individual in most cases, exempt from a future attack. It is a PREVENTIVE, not a cure—and can in no way illustrate the law of Hahnemann that “like cures like.” On the same principle, every drug that is used by the Homœopathist upon persons in health, should secure him against the natural disease, which it resembles. We do not find such a power, claimed by the most sanguine advocates of the system.

Mercury produces inflammation of the salivary and other glands in the vicinity of the mouth. This may run into ulceration. Hence, the Homœopathist considers it a certain remedy in the cure of ulcers in these parts. It may be true, that mercury in some cases will cure ulcerated sore throat, but if it do so, it affords no proof of the truth of Homœopathy. An ulcerated sore throat from other causes than the action of mercury, is very different from that which mercury produces. It is known to have a specific action, and therefore, when it is effectual



in healing ulcers arising from a different cause, it does not accomplish it according to the Homœopathic maxim of "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTUR," but in accordance with another rule, first promulgated by the father of physic—generally acted upon by medical men, and curing disease on the principle of "CONTRARIA CONTRARIIS." It is, by exciting a new but different action in the part, which eradicates the old one. Who would think of giving mercury to cure ulcers, which it had occasioned? Yet, upon the principle that "LIKE CURES LIKE," this would be the appropriate remedy.

Hahnemann asks, "what will suffocate sooner than the vapour of burning sulphur?—and the same vapour of burning sulphur," he says, "is found to be the best remedy to revive persons asphyctic from other suffocating causes." On this principle, when a man has been suffocated by carbonic acid or any other irrespirable gas, instead of giving him a pure air, and endeavoring to establish the process of respiration by allowing the inhalation of oxygen which is essential to life, you should place him in an atmosphere of sulphuric vapour. By this means according to the law of Hahnemann, he would be most easily restored to health.

If you are troubled with acidity of stomach, you should not use an alkali to remove it—but an acid should always be administered with the most certain prospect of relief. In the treatment of delirium tremens, it is of the utmost importance to distinguish it from an inflamed or engorged condition of the brain induced by a high state of intoxication. The safety of the patient may entirely depend upon a timely discrimination. Opium is the remedy upon which our chief reliance is placed in the one case, while it would most certainly prove fatal in the other—which requires an antiphlogistic course of treatment. Yet, who does not know, that in many cases, the symptoms are very similar in both.

We might in this manner, if time would permit, cite case after case; and dwell particularly upon every instance which the Homœopathist furnishes in illustration of this UNERRING law of nature, and satisfy every intelligent mind of their falsity, or want of application to it. It is founded upon erroneous views of medical science, and cannot receive the sanction of sound philosophy. The instances they adduce to illustrate it, are so badly chosen, and the conclusions to which they arrive are so irrationally drawn, that I do not wonder, after an investigation of its doctrines, so few intelligent physicians have embraced it.

The Homœopathist, in selecting his remedy in conformity with the maxim that "LIKE CURES LIKE," looks only to symptoms. He founds his treatment upon these alone. Entirely disregarding the nature or

cause of disease, he aims to remove the symptoms, and when this is done, the cure is complete. Dr. Herring remarks, that, "in future times the new pathology, will as far excel the old, as do the natural sciences of the present period those of the last century. But, at the bedside of the patient, the Homœopathic physician is unmindful of this future science." "His sole inquiry is after the symptoms, because the symptoms alone determine his choice of the remedy, and upon the fullness and accuracy with which they are noted, rests the entire management of the cure. All, therefore, depends upon the correct examination of the patient, but not upon any possible opinions concerning the nature and essence of the disease, nor upon any learned views concerning its concealed seat."

According to this view of an acknowledged author on the Homœopathic doctrine, which is but a repetition of the sentiments of Hahnemann himself, no value is to be placed upon the nature of the disease. No matter what produced it, or where it is located—whether it is an inflammation of the liver, the lungs, or the brain—a disease of high arterial action, or one of debility—a dropsy, or a fever—a rheumatism, or a consumption; it is all the same. We are not to trouble ourselves about any thing but the symptoms.—They are the only index to point out the remedy to be employed.

When called to a patient suffering with severe pain in the head, you need not enquire whether it is the result of an inflammation, a neuralgia, or a disordered stomach—whether it is owing to the existence of actual disease in that part, or merely the effect of sympathy from some other deranged organ of the body. If your patient has sickness of stomach, caused by disease in a remote part of the system, and which may be obscured by the distress occasioned by the sympathizing organ, you are only required to apply your remedy for deranged stomach, over-looking the cause altogether. If attacked with inflammation of the liver, you will prescribe for pain in the side or shoulder, paying no attention to that condition of the diseased organ which produced it. If called upon to prescribe for an apoplexy, which is usually marked with a considerable degree of drowsiness and stupor, you should administer opium, because this drug is known to occasion symptoms of this kind. Need I ask any well-informed physician, what would be the consequence of such treatment in this disease? *Death* must be its constant attendant.

The records of medical science furnish many examples of individuals falling victims to disease, of which no outward symptoms could be perceived. A case of this kind is related by a late re-



viewer directly in point, and which I shall be excused for relating in his own words :

“ A person had been affected, for a length of time, with a chronic disease, which was supposed to proceed from an external fistulous sore of the chest, accompanied with caries of one of the ribs. On examination of his body after death, the duodenum was found black, and so much softened, that it could not sustain the slightest force. The patient had suffered no symptoms of indigestion, no loathing of food, or vomiting, but had generally a good appetite.— Here the most acute Homœopath could not have discovered, from the symptoms, the nature of the malady ; indeed, there were no symptoms present—the all-important part of the disease, according to Hahnemann’s views, was wanting, yet the patient was carried off by a profound lesion of an important organ.”

Thus we might mention a great variety of cases to illustrate the absurdity of looking only to symptoms. And no clearer evidence need be adduced to establish the certain claims of Homœopathy to the grossest form of empiricism. The regular physician who aims to treat his patient upon the rational system, well knows how to value symptoms, so as not to be misled in forming his opinion of the nature of the case. While he places every proper value upon symptoms, by regarding them as one of the means of arriving at a correct conclusion, he examines into the cause as well as the nature of the disease, and after a full knowledge of all the circumstances attending it, he applies those remedies, which sound principles of philosophy and experience dictate.

The third maxim of the Homœopathic system may be expressed as follows :

That medicines acquire by certain mechanical processes, medicinal virtues, which by their specific power operate as an effectual remedy in their appropriate diseases—and “this virtue is developed in the direct ratio of the mechanical process, and in the inverse ratio of the quantity of the substance employed.”

To illustrate this more clearly, I will quote from Dr. Herring’s “*Concise View*,” the following remarks:

“He (Hahnemann) united one grain of the extract of Belladonna with a hundred drops of the spirits of wine. Of this mixture, one drop (which of course contained one hundredth part of a grain) he afterwards gave, in suitable cases, for a dose. But to his astonishment he observed that *this dose acted too forcibly*. He now made the great stride which none had done previously to him ; he took a hundred drops of the spirits of wine, added to them one drop, which

contained one hundredth of a grain of the medicine, shook them together, and, now had in every drop of the new mixture, therefore, the one thousandth part of a grain. If the one hundredth of a grain was quite an unusual dose, Hahnemann went far beyond the limits of previous experience in his second operation, viz : that of administering the dose to the one ten thousandth part of a grain. When he gave one drop of this second preparation in a case adapted to the remedy, he expected a very slight and inconsiderable effect. In the great majority of cases, indeed, a more rapid cure followed it than in the case of the preceding preparation, but to his great astonishment, much more frequently the same impetuous aggravation of symptoms. In short, it was not to be mistaken : the virtue of the medicine had by no means been taken away in these high dilutions. How striking soever this phenomenon was in itself, and however wonderful and strange it must have appeared to Hahnemann, it had, nevertheless, been indisputably the result of his manipulations ; and as a quiet observer of nature, he proceeded, hand in hand, with experience, still further. He added one drop of his second (the ten thousandth) dilution, to another one hundred drops of spirits of wine, shook them together, and thus procured a third mixture, in which each drop contained but the millionth part of the first grain of the extract of Belladonna. On administering this new preparation to his patients, he did not yet witness the desired and expected decrease of medicinal energy, the remedy remained as active as before, and in sensible children it operated frequently in quite as drastic a manner as the extract had at first ; nay, it appeared as if it operated with even greater violence than before—and therefore rendered necessary the exhibition of an antidote. Hahnemann, who knew that the secrets of nature had not yet been fully unveiled to us, and that any thing new and important, though ever so striking, *if its truth be attested by repeated experiment*, ought to be investigated, continued to prosecute this great discovery. He added one drop of each successive dilution to a successive portion of one hundred drops of spirits of wine, and united them by shaking. He perceived in the progress of these manipulations, that every successive dilution was still operative, and though attenuated a hundred fold at every step of the process, yet by no means did it become in the same proportion a hundred fold less efficient ; in fact, each dilution differed in activity very little from the dilution immediately preceding. He continued, therefore, these processes with the medicine, until experience taught him, that it had, at length, become entirely mild in its operation. The troublesome increase of the morbid symptoms became gradually less and less considera-



ble by dilution, nevertheless the succeeding salutary effect remained equally decided, and even the extreme dilutions themselves, were always sufficient to effect a cure. Remarking even from the thirtieth dilution, in very sensible subjects, an increase of the symptoms, he diminished the dose from one drop of this dilution, to a small portion of a drop. He discovered a mode by which a drop could be accurately divided into any desired number of parts, and from the one hundredth and even smaller fractions, decided effects were witnessed from the medicine."

"All other medicinal substances were found by him to be susceptible of a preparation similar to that of Belladonna."

Absurd as this may appear to a rational mind, we are not to stop here, in our dilutions, to develop the virtues of a medicine. Subsequent investigators of the Homœopathic doctrine have carried their attenuations to the fifteen hundredth and two thousandth dilution. And they confidently declare, that the last preparation of the series, has not lost all efficacy, but often shows itself too energetic. Surely, it requires the credulity of a believer in animal magnetism, or witch craft, to adopt such a sentiment.

Dr. Jahr says, "to explain the truly unheard of fact of the efficacy of his attenuations, Hahnemann has endeavored to set down, as a principle, that, the more we destroy the material parts of a substance, so much the more we develop or loosen the dynamic force, or in other words, the *spirit* of the medicine; and that, to augment the energy of preparations to an incredible extent, we have only to carry them from attenuation to attenuation, in submitting them at the same time to a great number of triturations and shakes."

From these extracts, which are taken from Homœopathic authors of acknowledged distinction, it is evident, that the principle upon which these infinitissimal doses act upon the diseased animal organism, is not in proportion to the quantity of matter they contain, but in proportion to their diminution and the amount of mechanical agitation to which they have been subjected. Now, to develop such a wonderful power in so small a portion of matter, by shaking or trituration, has only been successful in the hands of the Homœopaths. No other persons but Hahnemann and his disciples have been able to attain such miraculous effects. Among all the physicians and apothecaries of the allopathic practice, who have for a score of centuries been in the constant practice of shaking and triturating their medicines, not one of them has discovered this *alleged* fact, which stands opposed to every property pertaining to matter.

In order to present this subject of minute doses more clearly before the mind, we shall recur to calculations made by Dr. Panvini of Italy, and partly repeated by others, which prove most conclusively its absurdity.

The Homœopaths, we have already said, in the attenuation of their medicines, have adopted for multiplier, the number *one hundred*. "Thus, when they prepare a liquid medicine, they take one drop, which they mix with a hundred of spirits of wine, this is the first attenuation or dilution ; for the second dilution they take ten thousand drops, and so on, always multiplying by one hundred, as far as the thirtieth or even fortieth dilution. Dr. Panvini has calculated how much alcohol is necessary for the dilution of a medicinal drop, and how much sugar is needed for the attenuation of a grain of powdered substance, so as to arrive at the thirtieth and fortieth dilution."

"The first dilution of a drop of the tincture of chamomile for example, would require, as has just been mentioned, the hundred drops of alcohol ; the second, ten thousand drops, or nearly a pound ; the third, one hundred pounds, or nearly a barrel ; the fourth, one hundred barrels ; and continuing in proportion, the ninth would require as much alcohol as the lake Agnano could contain ; the twelfth, one hundred millions of lakes of Agnano ; the seventeenth, ten millions of Adriatic seas ; the thirtieth, as much alcohol as the terrestrial globe could contain, all our planetary system, and perhaps, all the stars of the first and second size that can be seen on a fine summer's night ; to which must be added, for the fortieth dilution, all the constellations that can be discovered from one pole to the other."

Then carry your calculations still further, even up to the two thousandth dilution, and it is impossible to form any conception of the amount of alcohol that would be required to dilute a single drop. It is not, however, necessary to use the whole of the liquid in making these dilutions, as but one drop of each attenuation is required to be retained. But a calculation of this kind enables us to judge more accurately of the enormous extent of division which a single drop or grain of a substance must undergo in carrying their attenuations so far. And yet, we are told with the most apparent sincerity, that these inconceivably minute portions of medicine not only retain medicinal powers, but have them increased by the mechanical process employed for their separation. Could any thing be more absurd?

"As a further illustration of his theory, Hahnemann affirms that



gold is without any action in our organism in its natural state; but that when one grain of this metal is triturated according to his process until each grain of the last triturated preparation contains a quadrillionth part of the original grain of the mineral, it will be so powerful that it will be sufficient to place this single grain in a phial, to be inspired for a moment, to produce the most amazing results, and none more so than the faculty of restoring to a melancholly individual disposed to suicide, his pristine partiality to life."

We shall not attempt upon this occasion, to notice even the principal arguments adduced by Homœopathic writers in defence of these extremely small doses of medicine. It is sufficient to deny that they can have any medicinal influence in removing disease. This must appear evident to any rational mind who honestly investigates the subject. It is true, they do not aggravate the symptoms, although in allopathic doses they might have this effect. If Hahnemann found belladonna to aggravate the symptoms of scarlet fever when administered in ordinary doses, it was only because it was unsuited to the disease. It was not because the dose was too large. And when he discovered by reducing the dose to a billionth and less, that it did not aggravate the symptoms, it was much more rational to suppose that the article had no effect whatever, and nature being permitted to exert her restorative powers unmolested, the cure was accomplished through her agency alone. So of every other remedy he employed.

From what we have said in a former part of this discourse, it is manifest that many of the articles used by Hahnemann, would, if employed in allopathic doses and upon the principle that "*like cures like*," not only materially aggravate disease, but frequently prove fatal to the patient. It is fortunate, therefore, for those who subject themselves to Homœopathic treatment, that this attenuation of medicine is an essential feature of the system. Were it not for this safeguard, you would soon find the falsity and danger of the maxim "*similia similibus curantur*," by the great multitude of its victims.

As well might we expect to see an individual nourished by infinitesimal atoms of food, which had been subjected to the manipulations of a Homœopathist, as to see him cured by his attenuated doses of medicine, without the agency of nature. If the mechanical process to which a medicine is exposed is sufficient to develop the latent virtues it contained, there is no good reason why the same means should not unfold the nutritious properties of a grain of flour, or a fibre of meat. The intemperate man who has nearly exhausted his supply of brandy, might in the same way, renew the power of his favorite beverage. There would be no need of making a new purchase. All that is required, would be to agitate the con-

tents of his bottle after each dram, diluting every time with cold water.

In answer to our objections to the agency of Homœopathic doses in the cure of disease, we are asked, how it is, that persons get well under this system of treatment? Whatever difficulty may appear to exist upon this point in the minds of those unacquainted with medicine, there can be none to a well informed physician. He is well acquainted with the part which medicine performs in the cure—and while he is fully sensible of its agency if judiciously applied, he knows too, that there exists in the animal economy a certain restorative power, which we call the “*vis medicatrix nature*,” and which is of itself in a vast majority of cases, sufficient to afford relief. All we claim to do as rational physicians is, to aid nature in this effort—and by so doing, we can greatly facilitate the recovery. No judicious physician would take the case entirely out of her hands. He would, by the application of his remedies, assist to substitute a healthy for a diseased action. And understanding the nature as well as the cause of the disease, he is the better qualified to apply his remedy with success. Now the Homœopathic physician denies this power of nature entirely. He gives her no part of the credit of the cure—but claims all for his inert and inefficient atom, to which he ascribes a *specific* power, operating upon the diseased organ alone, and disturbing no other part of the system. When the medicine is taken by his patient for a pain in one of the extremities, no impression is made upon the stomach to which it is applied, but acts in a specific manner upon the painful part alone. If it be tooth ache, that the medicine is to relieve, no impression is produced any where, but on the particular tooth. In this way, he explains the cure.

We say, in such cases, where a Homœopathic dose is given, nature effects the cure. The medicine can have no influence whatever, except so far as it satisfies the mind—and through this mental impression, the pain is suspended. Who does not know that healthy persons may be made sick, and sick persons made well through mental impressions? How often has a violent attack of tooth ache been relieved, through the influence of the mind alone, when about to undergo the operation of extraction? And thus, a great variety of pains, and even other symptoms, may be either produced, or removed by impressions made upon the mind. Such were Hahnemann's own private views, as may be seen by the following extract from the Dublin Medical Press, Oct. 16, 1844, being communicated by Dr. Schubert, of Dramburg :

“We hear it continually asserted that Hahnemann placed no



confidence in the powers of nature in curing disease ; but from my intercourse with him, I am quite satisfied that no physician ever trusted more to the *vis medicatrix naturæ*. It requires, indeed, but very little reflection to enable us to perceive that it was through the closest acquaintance with the curative powers of nature that Hahnemann was led to adopt his new system of medicine. I have heard him declare that he looked with contempt upon medical practice, and he thought that a patient would be none the worse if left to himself. He had a thorough conviction that all curable diseases might, under proper attention to diet, be removed by the efforts of nature alone ; he looked upon these as his sheet anchor. On one occasion, he said to me—"I give medicines but very seldom, although I always prescribe small powders ! I do this for the sake of keeping up in the patient's mind the firm belief that each powder contains a particular dose of some medicine ! Most patients will get well by adopting a simple mode of living, and by placing a boundless confidence in their medical attendants. Ordinary practitioners know nothing of this practically, although they are always talking of the healing powers of nature. If a patient recover under this treatment, they immediately ascribe it to the nauseous drugs which they have poured into him, although these commonly do more harm than good." He never hesitated to promise recovery to every patient without concerning himself about the nature of the malady ; and I have seen some ludicrous results follow these predictions. His plan was to demand for the cure, in the shape of a fee, a good round sum—one half to be paid down—*unlimited confidence* in his treatment—doses of sugar of milk and a particular diet ! The dieting, which simply consisted in the denial of all stimuli, he considered to be absolutely necessary in order to allow nature to have free play. *Unlimited confidence* in the treatment was his great support in carrying out this system ; and he invariably insisted upon this from every patient, well knowing that it was the important secret of life and death in such cases. Further, he used to observe—"We must not attend patients for nothing, or let them have even a penny-worth of medicine gratuitously ; the greater the sum paid for physic and physician, the greater is the confidence placed in both."

Here we have the secret of the Homoeopathic treatment fully set forth by the great master himself. It will be recollected however, that these were his private views. They were not intended for the public eye—but they lose none of their importance on this account. He relied altogether upon the *vis medicatrix naturæ* for the cure of his patients—while he amused them with the pretended

doses of medicine, which he administered in the shape of sugar pellets. The same thing is true, of every genuine Homœopathic practitioner. He cannot if he be an educated and enlightened physician, believe there is any virtue in his small doses of medicine. If they are reduced in the manner recommended, it is impossible to detect in one of their globules, even with the most delicate chemical test, the smallest quantity of the substance said to be present.

Another doctrine which the Homœopathsists hold as correct, is found embraced in the following extract from Dr. Black. He says "to the opponents of Homœopathy who endeavor to prove the inefficiency of our remedies by the argument, that a healthy man may devour the contents of a whole pocket case of Homœopathic medicines without feeling the least alteration," to this Brobdignaglike feat we reply, that the peculiarity of these remedies is not to operate on the healthy, but only upon individuals whose diseases bear to them a specific relation and affinity."

False as this doctrine is, it nevertheless, serves to help these *consistent* practitioners occasionally out of a difficulty as may be seen from the following anecdote, related by an eminent physician\* of the city of Philadelphia :

"A lady, the patient of a practitioner of this class, went to his office to consult him in her own case, and received a packet of powders, with directions to dissolve one in a tumbler of water, to take a teaspoonful of the solution twice a day, to note its effects carefully. On arriving at home, she placed the packet on a tolerably high mantel in the parlor, while she proceeded to the kitchen to obtain the water. A spoiled child, some four or five years old, observed with what especial care his mother deposited the treasure, and with the curiosity natural to his age, determined to embrace the opportunity presented by her absence to see what it contained; so, climbing upon a chair to the place where it was, he took down the packet, opened it, took out a powder, tasted it, and finding it sweet, swallowed it; and so of all the rest ! At the moment of finishing the last powder, his mother entered the room. It is not necessary to describe the scene that presented itself—the smiling unconsciousness of the victim, and the consternation and distress of the parent. With a mother's instinct, she flew to the doctor's office, which she had left but a short half hour before, and with terror portrayed in every feature, told him what had happened, that "little Tommy had eaten all the powders!" "What! Tommy eat all the powders!" responded the doctor, not knowing at the moment

---

\*Professor R. M. Huston.



what to say. "Yes, doctor, and for God's sake tell me what to do!" The doctor, still at a loss what to do or say, repeated the exclamation—"Tommy eat all the powders!" Scratching his head the while. "Yes doctor, dear doctor, do tell me what to do," said the agonized mother. Fortunately, by this time the doctor had regained his composure, and recollecting the fundamental law of Homoeopathy, the answer was at hand; so, with the happiest expression of face imaginable, he exclaimed; "Ah, ha! madam, don't be frightened! don't be frightened! that is the peculiarity of our medicine; it always cures the sick, but never affects the well—it won't hurt your child. For once, at least, the doctor's prognosis was right;—it *did* not hurt the child."

If Homoeopathic medicine when taken by the well, never affects them, but always cures the sick in minute doses, how would they explain its entire inactivity when taken in large quantities by the patient. How often have we known patients either by mistake or design, take whole packages of their powders, without producing any perceptible effect? Again and again, this has been done, by children as well as adults, and yet no injury has followed.

There are a few other topics it might be proper to notice in order to have a full understanding of the merits of Homoeopathy; such for instance, as that all chronic diseases arise from three primary causes the principal of which, is *itch*.\*—But these must give place to a few additional remarks, upon a point, which seems to be essential in this examination of the Homoeopathic system of treatment.

After this brief explanation of the principles of Hahnemann, we propose to dwell for a short time, upon the success of the treatment his system offers for the cure of disease. This we regard as a very important inquiry. If experience find, that greater benefits are derived from it, than attend the regular practice—if more prompt and certain relief is obtained for suffering humanity, by the application of these attenuated doses of medicine, let the allopathic system give way to it, and let us all join with hearty good will to spread abroad its beneficent doctrines. If on the other hand, we should find, that it falls far short of that wonderfully salutary effect which its advocates claim for it, and is greatly inferior to the practice of the regular physician, let us discard it as a mere phantom of the imagination, calculated to mislead credulous minds, and sacrifice the lives of its deluded followers. Such we believe it to be, after a careful examination of its merits. Such it has been proved to be, wherever the test has been fairly and justly applied.

---

\*All chronic diseases, according to Hahnemann, arise from SYPHILIS TENDENCY TO WARTS, and the ITCH.

In private practice, it is very difficult to make such experiments as will correctly determine the relative value of the two systems. To compare the practice of one practitioner with another in the same neighborhood, is not easily done, so as to do justice to both. The public mind may be vigilant in its observation of cases, and yet, be too little acquainted with their nature, to arrive at a just conclusion with regard to their treatment. It cannot be expected, that minds devoid of a knowledge of the structure and laws of the animal economy, the functions of healthy, or the nature of diseased organs—the symptoms of disease or the remedies which are best adapted for their removal, can justly appreciate the value of any particular system of treatment. To do this, requires a far greater amount of medical knowledge than is usually possessed by the public. In making this remark, I do not mean to depreciate the intelligence of the mass, but merely to say, that in order to judge correctly of medical truths, it is necessary to have some acquaintance at least, with the subject upon which they attempt to decide.

How often do we see that a self-constituted practitioner of medicine, who offers to treat disease upon some new system, takes hold of a case, even of the most trivial character, and either by accident, or through the restorative power of nature it recovers under his care—and is then blazoned through the community as a wonderful triumph over disease. That single case decides the unerring efficacy of his treatment, and all who are afflicted, are urged with the most unyielding pertinacity, to seek relief at the same never failing fountain of health. While this great prodigy of the healing art, by a single effort of his genius, has acquired a reputation for science and skill, which places him in the front rank of medical philosophers, the regularly educated and meritorious physician, perhaps in the same time, has treated a large number of similar but more serious cases, which has scarcely been noticed by the public eye. The latter pursues his daily course in the treatment of a vast amount of disease of the most aggravated forms, and being too modest to trumpet his own fame abroad, and having no kind friends to engage in this *laudable* work for him, he is left to devote his days and nights to toil and study, in order to render himself useful in alleviating the sufferings of human nature.

We are not however, left entirely to conjecture the success of the Homœopathic treatment, when compared with that of the rational system of medicine. That which cannot be so well done in private practice has been very satisfactorily tested in several public institutions under the authority of different governments. In Prussia, Austria, and Russia, experiments have been made, under



the most favorable circumstances for Homœopathy, and they have all tended to establish the undoubted fact, that the medicinal articles they employ perform no agency in the cures which take place. The power of nature residing in the animal economy, under a well regulated diet, being the only efficient means in effecting a restoration.

It is nevertheless true, that much stress is laid upon these investigations by Homœopathsists—and we find them whenever an opportunity offers to deceive, claiming the most perfect triumph for their new system. How far they are entitled to this eminent distinction, let a few extracts, which I make from a source not to be questioned, determine.

“The Prussian Government, a few years since, ordered a public trial of Homœopathie to be made in the largest hospital in Berlin, the Charite, by one of Hahnemann’s disciples, particularly recommended by him for that purpose. Although of the many hundred patients in that hospital, he selected twenty-five cases, which he considered most suitable for his experiments, *not one* was cured.—As Hahnemann afterwards asserted that the incompetency of his disciple must have been the only cause of failure, a second pupil was despatched by him to Berlin; the same misfortune attending his practice also, he was dismissed.”

“The experiments instituted by the Austrian Government in a large Hospital at Vienna, were attended with the same results.”—Dr. Herrman, of Saxony, one of the oldest disciples of Hahnemann, and probably the same whose name is quoted so frequently in the experiments described in Hahnemann’s *Materia Medica*, was expressly sent for by the Russian Government, to try the new method in a military hospital; being completely unsuccessful, he was dismissed, and the Homœopathic practice was entirely prohibited in all the Russian military hospitals. For the sake of experiment an equal number of patients, and so far as could be ascertained by minute examination, quite similar to those under the care of Dr. Herrman, were at the same time publicly treated by Dr. Giggler, Surgeon General of the Russian army, *methodo expectativa*, or by mere diet, without administering any medicine, and the result was similar to that obtained by the Homœopathic treatment of Dr. Herrman.”

The following table exhibits the result of the experiments made in one of the wards of the Hospital de Tuttschin, which contained a number of soldiers affected with dysentery and fever. The experiments continued during the space of two months:

|                 | Patients. | Cured. | Died. | Remained. |
|-----------------|-----------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Common method,  | 457       | 364    | —     | 93        |
| Homœopathic do. | 128       | 65     | 5     | 58        |

By an examination of this table it will be seen, that out of 457 patients treated by the regular system, not a single death took place—and 364 were cured, which is about eight-tenths of the whole number. While out of 128 patients treated by the Homœopathic plan, 5 died, and only 65 were cured. About one half recovered, and one in twenty-five died. The results here, fully corroborate the opinion heretofore expressed, that nature alone was the instrument of their recovery. The medicinal agents employed were entirely devoid of influence, and are in no way entitled to our confidence in the treatment of disease.

“Notwithstanding the results of this experiment were so decided against the new doctrine, the Ministers of the Russian Government some time afterwards summoned Dr. Herrman to Petersburg, gave him authority to select his own hospital, and to make any arrangements he thought fit. The wards were fresh painted, and every hygienic precaution faithfully executed. Even the kitchen was placed entirely under his control and superintendence; and in order to prevent the possibility of any interference a sentinel was placed before the door, and none permitted to enter during the occasional absence of Dr. Herrman. His first request respecting the patients was a very moderate and modest one, viz: that none should be sent to his hospital who labored under ulcers, dropsy, phthisis, &c., and that he should have the selection of all his cases! Even under these most fortunate circumstances, the results were most unfavorable to the new practice; the proportion of deaths to recoveries was much higher than in ordinary practice, and the duration of the treatment was always protracted and tedious.”

From an authentic source, I shall quote some experiments made during forty days of the Homœopathic clinic established in the military hospitals of Naples, under the direction of the Chevalier Cosme de Horatiis, and a committee of Physicians.

“It was announced,” says the reporter, “in an essay on Homœopathic clinic, that a great number of cases of simple fevers had been cured in two or three days; cases of violent phlegmonous angina tonsillaris in three days; of very violent pleuro-pneumony in six days; of gastric nervous fever, threatening typhus, in five days; a fever with erysipelas of the head in six hours; (the subject of this case was a Homœopathic physician, Dr. Laraja;) measles complicated with typhus and numerous affections, in four or five days; blennorrhagia with ulcers and orchitis, in twenty-six days; and of simple blennorrhagia, in thirteen days; palpitation of the heart, which had resisted ordinary methods, had disappeared as if by enchantment, and the twinkling of eye, &c. Such wonders



strongly excited the attention of the physicians of Naples ; every one desired to witness them ; a plan for experiments was presented to the king, which he approved, and ordered it carried into effect. It was decided,

"1st. That a commission should assist at the preparation and administration of the medicines ; that this commission should be composed of two members of the Medico-Chirurgical Academy ; of two members of the commission of public instruction, and the principal physicians of the Hospital.

"2d. That these commissioners, after having verified the attenuation of the Homœopathic remedies, should place the said remedies in a strong box, closing securely with two different locks, of which the keys of one should be given to the director of the clinic ; and the other, to the commissioners appointed to observe the treatment.

"3d. That the clinical ward should have but one door of communication, guarded by a sentinel ; that it should have all the requisites for salubrity ; that it should not contain more than from fifteen to twenty beds, and that two assistant physicians, one chosen by the prescribing physician, the other by the commissioners, should keep an exact register of all that happens to the patients ; the phases of their diseases ; their recoveries, and the deaths, if there be any.

"4th. That the admission of patients affected with acute or chronic affections, should be at the discretion of the prescribing physician and of the commissioners, with this condition, that the prescribing physician, should not be obliged to accept patients acknowledged incurable, or those whose diseases being imperfectly determined, and equivocal, ought to be considered as unfit for positive experiment.

"5th. That the commissioners having determined the nature of the disease, the prescribing physician should describe the symptoms, administer the remedy, and prescribe the regimen.

"6th. That every day, the state of each patient should be verified by the prescribing physician and the commissioners."

These rules being established, and the medicines prepared according to the rules already laid down, the experiments were made.

"In the selection of patients, the commissioners were careful not to take those which appeared to need energetic and prompt treatment, so as not to expose the life of any one. They first tried whether certain patients would not recover without the application of any remedy. Ten patients were then placed under observation. The prescribing physician wished to treat them ; but the commissioners decided otherwise, and the ten patients recovered. One of

them had a gastric fever, the Homœopathic doctor wished him to take one drop of the tincture of Ignatius' bean, diluted to the twelfth degree, representing the quadrillionth part of the primitive drop; which, according to the calculation of Dr. Panvini, was equivalent to the dilution in as much alcohol as ten million lake Agnanos would contain. The Homœopath physician protested against this expectant practice, fearing he said, that a day's delay would jeopardize the life of the patient; the commissioners endeavored to encourage him, depending upon a crisis. This crisis took place during the night. The next day half rations were given, and two days afterwards the cure was complete.

"Homœopathy might have been glorified for these cures, which, however, can be attributed solely to the efforts of nature.

"Passing next to the cases in which the Homœopathic treatment was employed, Dr. Panvini speaks of the slight affections which were cured, but without the commission being able to discover, during the treatment, any of the effects attributed to the Homœopathic remedies. These cases were six in number, viz: two cases of ophthalmia, two of rheumatism, one of simple blennorrhagia, and one of slight gastric fever; all diseases in which the treatment employed produced no effect, and which would have been cured by regimen alone, perhaps even without restrictions in this respect.

"The third series consists of more serious diseases. It is entitled, *cases which required the aid of Art, and in which the Homœopathic medicine proved itself wholly powerless.* One of the cases in this series is given, but our limits will not allow us to relate the details. It was a case of acute pleurisy, which got worse and worse under the Homœopathic treatment, and on the fortieth day, when Dr. Panvini ceased to assist at the clinic, the patient was in a most precarious state, with fever, and puriform expectoration streaked with blood. The physicians who saw this patient thought he might have been promptly cured by the usual treatment. The other cases in this series consisted of syphilitic diseases, ophthalmia, and enteritis, all of which became worse during the Homœopathic treatment, and it was necessary to have recourse to the ordinary treatment for their cure.

"Finally, in the fourth and last series, Dr. Panvini reports the experiments which he made himself with the remedies prepared by the Homœopaths, without any effect being produced. Among the remedies he employed were the staves-acre, the bryony, the belladonna, the pulsatilla, &c.

"On the whole, it results from forty days Homœopathic treatment, made under the observation of the commission appointed by the



King of Naples, that this treatment has no effect, and that it had the serious inconvenience, for some patients, of retarding the employment of remedies which might have cured them.

"Nevertheless, the physician who directed the treatment, was M. de Horatiis, the physician who had boasted the preceding year, of marvellous cures, and the author of the work entitled *Essay on Homœopathic medicine*. Alone, or surrounded by the partizans like himself of Homœopathy, he performs prodigies; in the presence of the commission he has not only failed to cure any one, but he allowed the condition of many patients to become aggravated, for the cure of whom it was necessary to have recourse to the ordinary treatment."

Could any thing exhibit in a clearer light, not only the inefficiency of this mode of treatment, but the actual danger which the patient incurs by submitting himself to it. If his case be a mild one, or his constitution but little impaired, the *vis medicatrix naturæ* may come to his relief and effect a cure; but most likely, his recovery will be more protracted, for the want of that artificial aid, which a rational and efficient system of treatment would afford. On the contrary, if the attack be a serious one which the restorative power of nature is not sufficient of itself to remove, and he does nothing to assist her, he may find himself carried to the brink of the grave, before he is conscious of his danger. How often have we all, who are engaged in the practice of medicine, been called to visit patients in this situation? Nothing is more certain to fix beyond the power of our art, many attacks of acute disease, than procrastination. It is in these cases particularly, that prompt and energetic treatment is required—and for the want of it, many are lost. Homœopathy is admirably adapted to foster this delay, while disease is striking its roots deeper and deeper into the system. As faithful sentinels, bound by the strongest obligations of duty, we would proclaim this danger, so that whoever may become the victims of this delusive system of treatment, the blood of guilt, may not be found on our skirts. We aim at truth—we scorn to deceive—and we love our profession too dearly, ever to dishonor it for the sake of gain.

We are told that eminent physicians of the old school have abandoned their former predilections, and adopted the principles of Homœopathy as a sure means of affording relief to the sick. *Eminent* physicians who have taken such a course, we believe are very rare—and we confess ourselves destitute of any information upon this point sufficiently authentic, to arrive at any other conclusion. Some persons have adopted this mode of treatment, who were at

one time engaged in the regular practice—but who, for want of success, yielded to an inordinate love of gain, took up this popular delusion, and practice upon one system or the other, either by deception, or at the option of their patient. I would not desire to say any thing harsh of such persons, their own consciences if not altogether insensible to every virtuous and honorable impulse, will be their own tormentors. They may flourish for a time, and rally round them a few deluded proselytes to spread abroad their ephemeral fame, but sooner or later, justice will overtake them in their career of duplicity and fraud. That some young physicians who were just entering upon their medical career, and felt compelled by the force of circumstances to secure an early support by this means, should avail themselves of this new mode of practice, and compromise their professional honor by plunging into empiricism, affords no proof whatever of its truth. So long as there are people to be deceived, and money to be filched from their pockets, you will find persons among all classes, willing to lend themselves to the vile work of deception. Such has been the world from its earliest days, and we have no reason to suppose it will soon be exempt from similar evils.

But among all your professional acquaintances where is there one of eminence in his profession, who has abandoned a good business and a good name, to build up a reputation among the followers of Hahnemann? Do you know a single case? Can you call to mind any one distinguished for his medical learning, or engaged as a successful practitioner of the old school? I say it, without the fear of contradiction, that where a regular physician has turned Homoeopathist, he is either a young man without practice, or an older one, who has failed of success in his calling. Now what reliance can we place upon the testimony of such interested witnesses as these? Are we to disregard the experience of ages, the living testimony of the almost entire medical world—the observations and facts, which our own lives have afforded, and yield all, to the vague speculations and dogmas of a visionary enthusiast?

It cannot be denied, that one means resorted to by Homoeopathic practitioners to swell the importance of their system is, to call the most trivial attacks, by names applied to the severest and most unmanageable forms of disease. By this course, they falsify their statements, and if a recovery takes place, are prepared to claim a greater triumph to their art. I do not say, that these misrepresentations are always intentional, it may be, and doubtless is so, that they assign names to diseases from ignorance of the true condition of the patient. But whether it occurs from ignorance or design,



we do know, they are frequently guilty of the practice we have alledged—and hundreds who are not competent, or have not the means of perceiving the truth, are led to the belief that Homœopathy is wonderfully successful in the cure of the worst forms of disease.

Again, we are charged with cendemning their practice without trial. According to their representations, we wilfully close our eyes against the truth, and go on in the old beaten track, without improvement, merely because our predecessors have taught us certain rules and practices, which had been followed for ages. Nothing can be more unfounded, than this gratuitous assertion. Men of eminence in our profession\* have given to Homœopathy every resonable consideration—they have practically and scientifically examined its pretensions to truth—they have left nothing undone which was calculated to throw light upon it, and divest it of the mystery which Hahnemann and his partizans have thrown around it. And every attempt of this kind, has only added to their conviction of the unsoundness of its principles, and the entire inefficiency of its practice.

But I must conclude—I have, I fear, detained you too long. With such a theme, how could I say less? It is not that I fear the pecuniary loss which our profession may sustain from the extension of Homœopathy, that I have selected it as the subject of this discourse. Loss, to the regular practice, is not the usual result of empiricism—and pecuniary gain is but a secondary consideration with the upright and benevolent physician. But to point out some of the characteristics of this false system of medicine, and urge my medical brethren to increased confidence in our own, as based upon rational principles, sound philosophy and pure benevolence, are the motives which incite me to this exposition. Let not the love of gain lead any of us from the plain path of duty, but with a clear conscience, and a fearless adherence to truth, press forward in the work allotted us, with the fullest assurance, that brighter honors and purer joys than are ever attained by the empyric, will crown our beneficent labors.

---

\* Drs. Bailly, Andral, Panvini, and others.

